

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 remain in the application with claims 1-5 having been amended hereby.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), as being unpatentable over *Dale, et al.*

In paragraph 14 of the instant Official Action, the Examiner sets forth the reasons for the allowability of claims 9-20. Specifically, as noted by the Examiner, the allowable subject matter is a device having a plurality of ports of bi-directional and uni-directional nature, and buffering units associated with the ports along with the ability to select the ports using an external command.

Claims 1 and 5 have been amended hereby to include these features noted by the Examiner, as comprising allowable subject matter.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-8 are patentably distinct over *Dale, et al.* by reason of the inclusion of this allowable subject matter.

Notice is respectfully taken of the allowance of claims 9-21.

Accordingly, by reason of the inclusion of the allowable subject matter in independent claims 1 and 5, it is respectfully submitted that all claims remaining in this application are now in condition for allowance.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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